Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (currently amended) A process for producing a colorant comprising a hydrophobic coloring matter substance, an amphoteric electrolyte and water, said process comprising:

Dissolving and/or dispersing the hydrophobic coloring matter substance in an organic solvent miscible with water to obtain a coloring matter substance solution in which the concentration of the hydrophobic coloring matter substance is in the range of 1-10 wt%;

contacting said coloring matter substance solution with an anion exchange resin and/or a cation exchange resin to obtain a purified coloring matter substance solution;

adding dropwise, while stirring, said purified coloring matter substance solution into a solution containing an amphoteric electrolyte, being an amino acid and an oligomer having a weight average molecular weight of 1,000 or less, in de-ionized water at a concentration of 10 wt% or less to obtain a water-containing organic solvent solution of the purified coloring matter substance;

removing the organic solvent component from the water-containing organic solvent solution of the purified coloring matter substance by an azeotropic distillation of water and said organic solvent, while supplying de-ionized water and/or an organic solvent if necessary, under an ambient or a reduced pressure, to obtain an

aqueous solution containing the coloring matter substance and the amphoteric electrolyte; ~~and~~

subjecting said aqueous solution containing a coloring matter substance and an amphoteric electrolyte to high-speed centrifugation ;and

collecting as a product, a resulting aqueous colorant composition containing said coloring matter substance and an amphoteric electrolyte.

Claim 2. (currently amended) A process according to claim 1, wherein the solution containing the amphoteric electrolyte in de-ionized water is the aqueous ~~solution~~ colorant composition containing said coloring matter substance and an amphoteric electrolyte.

Claim 3. (previously presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein said hydrophobic coloring matter substance is an oil-soluble dye and said amphoteric electrolyte is an amino acid.

Claim 4. (previously presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein said hydrophobic coloring matter substance is an oil-soluble dye and said amphoteric electrolyte is an amphoteric electrolyte having an isoelectric point of 6 or higher.

Claim 5. (previously presented) A process according to claim 1, wherein said hydrophobic substance is an oil-soluble dye and said amphoteric electrolyte is arginine, histidine, glycine or combination thereof.

Claim 6. (currently amended) ~~A~~ An aqueous colorant composition ~~obtainable~~ obtained by the process according to claim 1.